

## ***For Additional Year 2000 Information***

The following web sites are provided as tools that may be useful in addressing the Year 2000 challenge:

### ***Best Practices (GSA/CIOC)***

**(<http://www.gsa.gov/gsacio/bpfedgud.htm>)**

provides valuable guidance on best practices in achieving the various phases of Year 2000 compliance.

### ***GAO's Year 2000 Computing Crisis:***

#### ***An Assessment Guide***

**(<http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/y2kguide.pdf>)**

serves as a guide for developing a Year 2000 compliance project checklist. (This document is in PDF format and requires a free *Adobe Acrobat* Reader for viewing.)

### ***The GSA/CIO Year 2000 Information Directory***

**(<http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov/mks/yr2000/y201toc1.htm>)**

provides up-to-date information as well as links to federal agency and state Year 2000 web sites.



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of the Chief Financial and  
Chief Information Officer  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4110

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FIRS 1-800-877-8339, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., ET, M-F

The Year 2000 Issue:

# **CHALLENGE FOR THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY**

**February 1998**



## What Is the Year 2000 Issue?

All organizations are potentially affected by the Year 2000 issue. Computer date processing applications that use a two-digit year (98) instead of a four-digit year (1998) might be unable to recognize a date code for the new century. For example, 00 could be read as 1900 instead of 2000. As a result, computer systems might stop working or produce inaccurate data.

Year 2000 problems also can affect personal computers, local area networks, telecommunications systems, and systems and equipment that use imbedded technology, such as fire alarm systems, heating and cooling systems, elevators, and telephone switching equipment.

Thus, government and private sector operations are in jeopardy if action is not taken to identify and correct potential Year 2000 problem areas.

## How Will the Education Community Be Affected by the Year 2000 Issue?

The entire education community, including the Education Department's (ED) customers and service providers, faces the Year 2000 issue.

ED's customers and service providers need to ensure that their computer systems are able to store, process, and report date data in ways that differentiate between years before and after the Year 2000. This will prevent disruptions in internal operations, data exchanges, receiving funds, and other critical activities.

They also need to ensure that devices using embedded technology will not be adversely affected because of inability to handle the millennium date change.

If it has not already done so, the education community leadership needs to take action immediately because addressing the Year 2000 issue requires significant lead time and resources.

In addition, ED and the education community need to work closely together to ensure that all data exchanges and other interfaces are Year 2000 compliant.

## What Is the Education Department's Strategy to Become Year 2000 Compliant?

The Department has begun a five-phase, multi-year funded strategy to become Year 2000 compliant. It includes:

- **Awareness.** A Year 2000 program team has been established to provide leadership in defining and explaining the importance of achieving Year 2000 compliance.
- **Assessment.** This phase involves preparing an inventory of information systems and equipment with embedded technology for each business area and assessing the impact of potential Year 2000-induced failures.
- **Renovation.** This renovation phase involves making software and hardware changes, developing replacement systems, and decommissioning eliminated systems.
- **Validation.** This phase will test, verify and validate converted or replaced systems.
- **Implementation.** In this final phase, converted or replaced computer systems will be put into use.

As part of this strategy, ED will be analyzing all data exchanges with the education community to ensure that the Department continues to carry out its business.

Also, contingency plans will be drawn up to determine necessary actions in case systems are not able to be fixed or to deal with other difficulties that may arise.

## Education Department Year 2000 Information and Assistance

For information on ED's Year 2000 Project and guidance on how to ensure your computer system meets compliance requirements, go to the Department's Year 2000 Project web site at (<http://www.ed.gov/y2k>).

### *Education Department Addresses for Year 2000 Correspondence*

ED has established two mailboxes for Year 2000 questions and correspondence. They are located at:

**y2k@ed.gov** for issues involving elementary and secondary education and all other non-postsecondary education programs; and

**ope\_y2k@ed.gov** for issues involving postsecondary education programs.

### *Education Department Postal Address for Year 2000 Mail*

Year 2000 Project  
Office of the Chief Financial  
and Chief Information Officer  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4110